



هيئة ضمان جودة التعليم و التدريب  
Quality Assurance Authority for Education & Training

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**West Riffa Primary Girls School  
West Riffa - Southern Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 7-9 May 2012**

## Table of Contents

---

<b>The Schools Review Unit .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Characteristics of the school .....	2
<b>Table of review judgements awarded.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Review judgements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Overall effectiveness.....	4
Students' achievement.....	5
The quality of provision.....	6
Leadership, management and governance .....	9
<b>The school's main strengths.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>12</b>

## The Schools Review Unit

---

The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET), an independent national authority, attached to the Cabinet and set up under Royal Decree No. 32 of 2008, amended by the Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. It is established to raise standards in education and training.

The SRU is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all schools and kindergartens
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for school/kindergarten improvements.

Review involves monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of provision against a clear set of indicators. The reviews are independent, objective and transparent. They provide important information for schools and kindergartens about their strengths and areas for improvement to assist in focusing efforts and resources as part of the cycle of school improvement in order to raise standards.

Review grades are awarded a four-point scale:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Outstanding (1)	Outcomes or provision are at least good in all areas and outstanding in the majority.
Good (2)	Outcomes or provision are at least satisfactory in all areas and good in the majority.
Satisfactory (3)	A basic level of adequacy. There are no major weaknesses, or the majority of areas are satisfactory. Some areas may be good.
Inadequate (4)	There are major weaknesses or the majority of areas are inadequate.

## Introduction

This review was conducted over three days, by a team of eight reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written and other work, analysed data concerning the school's performance and other documents, and talked with staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

### Characteristics of the school

<b>School's name</b>		West Riffa Primary Girls															
<b>School's type</b>		Government															
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1952															
<b>Age range of students</b>		6-12															
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>							
		Grade 1-3 Cycle 1				-				-							
		Grade 4-6 Cycle 2				-				-							
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	-	<b>Girls</b>	635				<b>Total</b>	635							
<b>Students' social background</b>		The majority of students are from families with average income.															
<b>Classes per grade</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>				
	<b>Classes</b>	3	4	3	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-				
<b>Town /Village</b>		West Riffa															
<b>Governorate</b>		Southern															
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		11 administrative and 40 technicians															
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		61															
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MoE)															
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic															
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		Two years															
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		The national examinations of the QAAET															
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>		-															
<b>Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>				<b>Gifted &amp; Talented</b>				<b>Physical Disabilities</b>				<b>Learning Difficulties</b>			
		111				25				-				60			
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building a multi-purpose hall in 2010-11</li> <li>• The appointment of a new deputy principal in 2011-12.</li> </ul>															

## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good			
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	2	-	-	2
Students' personal development	1	-	-	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2	-	-	2
The quality of the curriculum implementation	1	-	-	1
The quality of support and guidance for students	1	-	-	1
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	1	-	-	1

### Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

## Review judgements

---

### Overall effectiveness

- How effective is the school in meeting the needs of students and their parents?**

#### Grade: 2 Good

The overall effectiveness has changed from being judged satisfactory in February 2009 to good as a result of improvements in achievement and teaching, which are now good, and in all other aspects, which are now outstanding. Strategic planning has built on accurate and regular self-evaluation. Students participate well, possess high self-confidence and show outstanding ability to take on responsibilities and leadership roles in lessons. Teaching strategies are varied which are effectively planned and managed. Most students are effectively supported and achieve levels above the expected standards and notable progress in most subjects, especially students with learning difficulties. Students' knowledge and experiences are expanded because of the variety of extra-curricular activities and the effective use of resources and environment. Both students and parents are highly satisfied with the school.

- How strong is the school's capacity to improve?**

#### Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school's capacity to improve has changed from good to outstanding due to the improving work that the school administration is doing which is based on shared planning, teamwork spirit, comprehensive self-evaluation of all of the school practices. This was used to build a comprehensive strategic plan that is continuously followed. It focused on the development of the teaching and learning, developing positive behaviour and providing support for all categories of students. The plan also focused on internal training, fruitful communication with outstanding schools to exchange expertise. Despite the shortage of facilities, the school managed to build a multi-purpose hall and effectively utilise the available resources which contribute to raising students' motivation towards learning and the achievement of most of them.

## **Students' achievement**

### **□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?**

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

Students in Grade 3 and 6 attained standards very close to the average in the national examinations in 2009 to 2011 both in Arabic and mathematics. However, they attained standards that are just above average in 2011 in English and science in Grade 6. These results reflect the standards of most students in lessons, especially in science in the second cycle.

Students attained pass rates that range from 73% to 100% in the core subjects in the school examinations for 2010-11. These rates are commensurate with the proficiency rates in most of the core subjects in Grades 1 and 2, while varying in Grade 3, especially in mathematics. Pass rates reflect the standards of most students in lessons, especially in outstanding and good lessons which represent two thirds of the core subjects because of the effective use of a variety of teaching strategies. Most students acquire examination skills and information technology well in the second cycle and the numeracy skills in the first cycle and in Grade 5, however multiplication and division skills in Grades 4 and 6 are less.

Students' results over three consecutive years 2008-2011 show students pass rates stable in most of the core subjects in the first cycle and they show progress in Arabic language. Standards of second cycle students show progress in most of the core subjects while varying in mathematics. They also show clear progress in most lessons and written works especially in Arabic and science in grade five. Students also progress in the first cycle lessons especially in Arabic and science as a result of challenging students' abilities and the variety of activities according to their standards.

High attaining students and those with learning difficulties make notable progress in line with their abilities in lessons, enrichment and special education programmes. These are organised for individuals and groups and as a result students' abilities are challenged in a variety of ways and effective support is received. However, the progress of low attainers is not to this level, due to the variance in the educational support they receive.

### **□ How good is the students' personal development?**

#### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

Students participate enthusiastically and effectively in lessons both individually and in groups and through asking questions. They also participate effectively in extra-curricular

activities such as the English and Arabic clubs which impact well in helping their great self-confidence.

Students' capacity to take on responsibilities and leadership roles in classes is high, such as the young teacher, acting, stating opinions and discussions. Students' self-confidence is clear in the active students' council, morning broadcasts and the school committees such as 'Future Butterflies' and 'the Promising Minds', which undertake solving problems about health and the environment. These have a positive impact on developing students' understanding and knowledge.

Most students attend school and lessons regularly and punctually as a result of their consciousness and abidance with the school's rules and regulations. The vast majority of students work in harmony with their colleagues and teachers and feel safe due to their relationships which are based on mutual respect. They are highly perceptive, which is apparent in their conduct inside and outside the classes and is clear in their close attention to preserving school property and the environment.

All students have strong ethics and Islamic values. They show clear understanding of Bahrain culture and heritage and take part in 'The Caravan of Benefaction', which focuses on instilling Bahrain heritage such as traditional games and weddings. Students also have strong values because of the executed programmes which emphasises honesty and thanks.

## **The quality of provision**

### **□ How effective are teaching and learning?**

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

Teachers are self-confident, enthusiastic and have strong subject knowledge. They convey knowledge accurately and enable students to acquire concepts and skills in most lessons especially in Arabic and science in the second cycle. Effective teaching and learning strategies such as brainstorming and directed discovery in the first cycle and cooperative learning, learning by play in the second cycle provide good opportunities. Learning is consolidated with educational resources such as real objects and flash cards in science lessons and employing modern technology such as smart boards which contribute to increasing students' enthusiasm.

Teachers develop students' higher order thinking skills such as deduction, explanation, justification of answers in math and English and expressing opinions and discoveries in science. They challenge students' abilities well in a variety of introductory activities which



focus on fluency, oral questions and differentiated class activities. This contributes to developing students' abilities and increases their motivation while this was less in satisfactory lessons especially in the first cycle.

Most teachers manage lessons effectively with organised planning, clear instructions and tasks. Time is managed effectively. Students are stimulated and encouraged outstandingly well. Group star boards, presents, gifts and the use of praise greatly encourages students. There is continuous support during group activities. Reinforcement using flash cards contributes significantly to students' participation and increases enthusiasm and accurate performance. Support for students with low attainment is satisfactory in some of the first cycle lessons and in mathematics in the second cycle. As a result of a sharper focus on high attainers, these students do better.

Homework is set appropriately and marked regularly. Feedback is provided such as assessment and encouraging remarks which contribute to developing students' performance. Presenting the 'Week's Star' award. Teachers implement effective assessment methods which meet students' needs in most lessons. This includes; verbal and written and individual and group assessment especially in English, Arabic throughout and science in the second cycle. Assessment results are used for planning, preparation of differentiated lesson activities, and remedial and enrichment programmes, which contributed to the proficiency and progress of most students in a good way.

**□ How well does the implementation and enrichment of the curriculum meet the educational needs of the students?**

**Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school consolidates students understanding of their rights and duties and develops citizenship through advisory banners and creating class educational corners. High attainers enjoy celebrations and national festivals such as the National Day and Bahrain First festivals. This contributes highly to them accepting responsibility and maintaining school facilities.

The curriculum is enriched by many extra-curricular activities, such as the English club and 'Riffa Buds'. Talented students participate in the choir and the 'Promising Minds' committee. These contribute to developing students' abilities appropriately. Activities enable students to learn from society and the environment through well planned lectures such as those organised by Kanoo Centre and the community police. Traditional games in the morning assembly reinforce values and local and national cultures.

The school regularly reviews lesson plans, subject plans and the curriculum to update them. This includes the use of questionnaires and methods such as the analysis of the Islamic studies book and the preparation of study notes, exemplified by 'My language arts' and 'the harvest of multiplication'. This contributes to enabling students to transfer knowledge among subjects, acquire life skills and prepares them for the later stages of education. Facilities are used well to enrich the curriculum.

## □ How well are students guided and supported?

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

New students and their parents are inducted well through an entertaining programme and they settle into school easily. Grade 3 students are inducted into Cycle 2 through advisory lessons and general educational advice as well as meetings for the parents. Grade 6 students are prepared outstandingly well for the next stage of education through a preparatory programme and a visit to the intermediate school.

Students' characters are positively reinforced through their behaviour and meeting their personal needs. For example vouchers for school meals are provided and diagnostic tests in core subjects carried out. It implements a reading readiness examination for new students and the results are used to provide effective support for students with learning difficulties. Remedial programmes include electronic letters and the silent reading project for Cycle 1 students. Enrichment programmes for high attaining and talented students include 'students got talent'. The school employs its facilities in many distinct programmes which supports students' various needs.

The school communicates with parents regularly and effectively through many channels, to inform them of their daughters' academic and personal progress.

A safe and healthy environment is provided. This includes periodic maintenance and regular evacuations, with the cooperation of the civil defence. Health and safety programmes are presented by the 'future butterflies' committee, while the science committee runs the garbage recycling project.

## **Leadership, management and governance**

- How effective are leadership, management and governance in promoting high achievement, strong personal development and school improvement?**

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school's shared vision focuses on achievement through effective practices across the school's work. It is fully aware of its strengths and areas for improvement due to distinct efforts exerted in regular and accurate diagnosis. Staff participate in the evaluation process, with results used to update the comprehensive strategic plan objectives. Its priorities can be changed in accordance with any improvements. The plan focuses on developing students' basic skills and creating a comprehensive educational environment which clearly contribute to great improvements.

School administration's decision making is based on cooperation. It delegates responsibilities such as department leadership to some teachers, which increases their commitment and motivation to work. Senior and middle leadership pay great attention to raising teachers' efficiency. Training needs are met with a variety of effective training programmes and workshops that include introductory activity, brainstorming and differentiated teaching. Class exchange visits and special training programmes for new teachers are effective. This improves class teaching significantly.

Educational resources and facilities such as the resource centre, electronic classroom and computer laboratory are used well, which reinforces and enriches teaching and learning. However, specialist laboratories are too few and some classrooms are in need of refurbishment. The school communicates well with the local community to extend students experiences and interests and instil community partnership. The 'flowers group' participates in cleaning beaches and presents dances from popular folklore in Al Noor Charity Society activities. The school also received the southern municipality council's shield for its effective participation in the success of the National Project. Parents and students views are regularly sought through such channels as the students' and mothers' councils. The school responds effectively to their suggestions in such matters as organising the students' exit from school and accepting a parent's contribution in training students on knitting. It also responds to students suggestions in organising the purchasing process from the school canteen. These actions have gained outstanding satisfaction from both parents and students.

The board of directors and the technical committee contribute highly in improving the educational practices by effective follow up of the school's work. Though the school's relationship with the improvement partner is relatively new, the school has praised his role and great contribution in the development of the teaching and learning processes. This has been achieved by presenting training workshops about different teaching situations.

## **The school's main strengths**

---

- The strategic plan which has flexible and specific objectives based on continuous and accurate self-assessment for all of the school work aspects
- Students' achievement of high standards characterised by stability of success in most of the core subjects
- Students' abilities to take on responsibility, leadership roles and initiative in discussing ideas, opinions and their high self-confidence
- The curriculum with its variety of extra-curricular activities, which enrich and meet students' needs and interest well.

## Recommendations

---

### **In order to improve, the school should:**

- ensure the benefit from outstanding and good practices in developing teaching and learning strategies are provided on a larger scale to:
  - develop students' basic skills in English, especially in Cycle 1
  - develop higher level thinking skills in Cycle 1
  - support low attaining students in Cycle 1, and in mathematics in Cycle 2
- provide facilities such as a science and family education laboratory and more classrooms better suited to students' needs.